

Message Text

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PAGE 01 GUATEM 01391 071840Z
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 EA-10 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00
CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00
PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 IO-13 /075 W
-----006914 071841Z /43

O R 071753Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9446
INFO AMEMBASSY MANAGUA
AMEMBASSY NASSAU
AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE
AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA
USCINCSO QUARRYHTS CZ
AMEMBASSY TOKYO

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NASSAU FOR DEPUTY ASST SECRETARY SHELTON

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, GT
SUBJ: ELECTION SITREP #3

REF: GUATEMALA 1365 (NOTAL)

1. ELECTORAL REGISTRY ANNOUNCED EVENING MARCH 6 FURTHER
PARTIAL RESULTS, AS FOLLOWS:

LUCAS (PR/PID) 169,811 (36.9 PERCENT)
PERALTA AZURDIA (MLN) 171,951 (37.3 PERCENT)
PERALTA MENDEZ (DCG) 118,659 (25.8 PERCENT)

WE ESTIMATE ABOVE FIGURES REPRESENT ABOUT 60 PERCENT OF TOTAL
RETURNS. THEY DO NOT INCLUDE ANY FOR GUATEMALA CITY, FOR WHICH
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RETALLYING BEGAN LATE YESTERDAY AFTERNOON. ELECTORAL REGISTRY
DOES NOT INTEND TO ANNOUNCE GUATEMALA CITY RESULTS UNTIL TOTAL
CITY RESULTS ARE AVAILABLE. ELECTORAL REGISTRY ESTIMATED
LAST NIGHT THAT TOTAL RESULTS FOR COUNTRY WOULD NOT BE
AVAILABLE UNTIL AFTERNOON OR EVENING MARCH 8. IN TOTALS
BY DEPARTMENT PERALTA AZURDIA LET IN 12, LUCAS IN 9, AND
PERALTA MENDEZ ONLY IN ONE (TOTONICAPAN). ANNOUNCEMENT OF

DCG VICTORY IN QUETZALTENANGO (REFTEL) WAS APPARENTLY PREMATURE.

2. BREAKING RELATIVELY LONG SILENCE, PERALTA MENDEZ AND DCG LEADERS HELD PRESS CONFERENCE EVENING MARCH 6. PERALTA MENDEZ IMPUGNED ELECTION RESULTS THUS FAR DIVULGED (NOT JUST CONTROVERSIAL MUNICIPAL TALLY) AND CHARGED THAT ATTEMPTS AT FRAUD BY THE OFFICIAL PARTIES (MEANING BOTH THE LUCAS AND PERALTA AZURDIA CAMPS) WERE THE ORDER OF THE DAY. HE CLARIFIED, IN RESPONSE TO REPORTER'S QUESTION, THAT HE WAS NOT SAYING THAT VICTORY HAD BEEN TAKEN AWAY FROM HIM. HIS CAMP DID NOT HAVE FULL RESULTS FROM HIS DELEGATES IN THE INTERIOR (IN PART, HE SAID, BECAUSE THE TELEGRAPH SYSTEM REFUSED TO PROCESS DCG TELEGRAMS). WHAT HE DID SAY WAS THAT HE HAD NOT LOST AND THAT THE RESULTS MUST BE CAREFULLY REVIEWED. CONTRARY TO EARLIER REPORTS, HE WAS NOT ASKING THAT THE ELECTIONS BE ANNULLED. SOMEWHAT WEAKENING PERALTA MENDEZ' PRESENTATION WAS HIS CRITICISM OF THE ELECTORATE FOR NOT COMING TO THE POLLS IN GREATER NUMBERS. HE BLAMED "THOSE BAD GUATEMALANS WHO ASKED THE PEOPLE TO VOID THEIR BALLOTS OR ABSTAIN, AND THE LATTER FOR NOT HAVING COMPLIED WITH THEIR PATRIOTIC DUTY.....WHO KNOWS," HE SAID, "WHY THE CITIZENRY DIDN'T RESPOND IN THE WAY WE WISHED." THE DCG CANDIDATE SAID THAT HE DOES NOT PLAN TO LEAD A "CIVIL WAR," BUT THAT THE PRESENT SITUATION IS THE TYPE WHICH CAN CAUSE ONE.

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3. LUCAS AND PERALTA AZURDIA CAMPS CONTINUE TO CLAIM VICTORY ON BASIS OF THEIR PARTY TALLIES. PR/PID VICE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE VILLAGRAN KRAMER CALLED ON ALL PARTIES TO DIALOGUE AND COMPARE NOTES, AT MINIMUM, TO ISOLATE THOSE AREAS WHERE CONTROVERSY EXISTS. BOTH MLN AND CDG REBUFFED THIS OVERTURE. MLN VICE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE ARAGON QUINONEZ NOTED IN PASSING THAT MLN'S TALLY FOR GUATEMALA CITY SHOWED PERALTA MENDEZ IN SECOND PLACE BEHIND PERALTA AZURDIA.

4. PRESIDENT LAUGERUD HAS YET TO COMMENT PUBLICLY ABOUT THE COURSE OF THE VOTE PROCESSING. PRESIDENTIAL PRESS SPOKESMAN ARCHILA SAID MERELY THAT THE EXECUTIVE HAD LIVED UP TO ITS PROMISE OF FREEDOM FOR THE VOTERS AND IS NOW ONLY AN OBSERVER OF THE RESULTS.

5. COUNTRY CONTINUES RELATIVELY QUIET. YESTERDAY ARMY ROAD BLOCKS, SEARCHING FOR ARMS, STOPPED VEHICLES AT ALL ENTRY POINTS TO THE CAPITAL CITY. ONLY VIOLENT INCIDENT REPORTED THUS FAR WAS FATAL SHOOTING OF AN MLN MILITANT AS HE WAS LEAVING MLN HEADQUARTERS "VICTORY" CELEBRATION LAST NIGHT. SUSPECT HAS BEEN PICKED UP BUT CIRCUMSTANCES

ARE UNCLEAR.
BOSTER

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